

# MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN NEWSLETTER: MARCH 2010



## 5<sup>th</sup> SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION NETWORK CONFERENCE HELD IN AFGHANISTAN

For the first time, the South Asian Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) network conference was held in Afghanistan from 28 – 30th March 2010, organized by the Afghanistan CBR network and partner ministries (MoPH, MoLSAMD and MoE). The conference focused on the role of CBR in empowering women and children with disabilities. Over 350 delegates from countries such as Pakistan, India, Maldives, Iran, Tajikistan and UK participated, with more than half being people with disabilities. 43 Disabled People Organizations from 23 provinces of Afghanistan also contributed extensively and shared their opinions and experiences. The active participation of women was another feature of the conference.

Miss Nadira Hayat, the Deputy Minister of MoPH said “MoPH will work very closely with the CBR Network and other stakeholders to pilot and field test the Eastern Mediterranean Region Community Based Rehabilitation Strategy developed by the World Health Organization. The focus of this strategy is the equalization of opportunities and involvement of local community in the rehabilitation, prevention and human rights for persons with disabilities”.

MoLSAMD also promised to use the new matrix of CBR in their policies & strategies and to implement the CBR concept as outlined in the national development strategy of Afghanistan.



The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women’s Affairs also committed to promotion and implementation of the CBR Concept in their respective Ministries.

Susan Helseth, the deputy programme director of MACCA said that MACCA and the UN agencies will support the concept of CBR in order to empower communities and persons with disability to identify their needs and priorities.

Representatives of the other countries presented challenges, activities and achievements in terms of empowering women and children with disabilities. As a result of the conference, new ideas and a better understanding of CBR was established among the Disabled People Organizations, line ministries and civil society. In addition, Afghanistan was chosen as the South Asian CBR Network coordinator for the next two years.

## MACCA SUPPORTS MoLSAMD CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

MoLSAMD celebrated International Women's Day for women with disabilities on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010 in Kabul involving more than 200 women with disabilities. The event started with the recitation of Holy Quran and the performance of the national anthem in sign language. Her Excellency Amina Afzali, minister of MoLSAMD congratulated the women and thanked the MACCA and other organizers of the event. Miss. Sara Esmati, Director of Kindergartens the message of the first lady H. E. Zeenat Karzai "I consider this a positive step towards equal rights for women with disabilities as most remain vulnerable and have various limitations in their lives." Susan Helseth, deputy director of MACCA also gave a speech, "I hope that this is a reminder to you all of the individual dignity you possess and the respect you deserve, as the theme for this year reminds us 'Equal rights, Equal opportunities – progress for all'". During the event, H. E. Amina Afzali distributed gifts to all women with disabilities which were provided by MACCA and the Turkish troops in Afghanistan. Afghan artists performed dramas highlighting the issues of women with disabilities.



## ATC CELEBRATES ITS 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Afghan demining organization ATC celebrated its 21<sup>st</sup> birthday on 24<sup>th</sup> March in Kabul in the presence of government authorities, UN officials and representatives from the donor community. 50 deminers who have worked with ATC for more than 20 years were also present. Besides thanking the donors for continuous support of the mine action, Kifayatullah Eblagh, ATC director said: "ATC started demining in 1989 with 35 deminers in eastern Kunar province. Now employs over 5,000 deminers. Demining started in Afghanistan without specific demining tools, but now the latest technology is employed providing better protection for deminers. Now the world is using Afghans' experiences and expertise to remove the mines and other explosive remnants of war. Afghan experts now work in Mozambique, Columbia and Iraq". At the end of the programme ATC distributed plaques to the 50 deminers who have been working with ATC for 21 years.

## MINE AND ERW INCIDENTS JANUARY– MARCH 2010

Month	18 Years and Younger		Over 18 Years		Unknown Age/Gender	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Jan	33	3	22	1	0	59
Feb	11	14	11	3	1	40
March	30	3	12	0	0	45
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>144</b>

## MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

### Ottawa Treaty:

Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 2013;

Destroy all known anti-personnel mine stockpiles by 2007; and

Provide mine risk education to Afghans and assist mine survivors.

### Afghanistan Compact:

Land area contaminated by mines and ERW will be reduced by 70% by March 2011;

All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by March 2007.

## DESTRUCTION OF ALL KNOWN STOCKPILES OF ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

*The Government of Afghanistan successfully fulfilled its Article 4 of Ottawa Treaty and Afghanistan Compact benchmark to destroy all known stockpiled anti-personnel landmines in its territory in October 2007.*

## KEYS TO MEETING THE BENCHMARKS FOR MINE ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN

- \* Sustaining existing capacities
- \* Expansion of Community - Based Demining
- \* Programming through focused projects
- \* Introduction of competitive tendering
- \* Enhanced fundraising to ensure resources to meet benchmarks

## CHALLENGES TOWARDS BENCHMARKS

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan must increase multilateral and bilateral funding to mine action to achieve the targets set by the Ottawa Treaty and the Afghanistan Compact. Essentially, funding needs to be coherent to enable effective delivery; this means funds must be received before the beginning of the year . If the funds are provided, the MAPA has the technical capability to achieve the targets.

## MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY JANUARY - MARCH 2010

- \* 3,910 AP mines, 212 AT mines, and 245,765 ERW destroyed.
- \* 28 communities cleared of mines and other explosive remnants of war.
- \* 99,501 women and girls and 135,772 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

## EXPLANATION ON CHANGES TO BENCHMARK TABLE

### Introduction:

In January 2006, when the Afghan Compact was signed, the baseline set of known hazard was 719 sq. km, therefore the target of clearing 70% of the hazard required a removal of 503 sq km. The benchmark table below shows that to date, 574 sq. km has now been cleared. This would mean the MAPA would have now exceeded the goal of 70% clearance, if the baseline had remained the same.

However, the baseline set at that time was in fact an incorrect picture of the overall hazard in the country. Much work has been done over the last few years to ensure that the national database presents an accurate picture of known hazard is included in this database. For a full explanation on these changes, please see p25-27 of the 1389 Integrated Operational Framework, available on [www.macca.org.af](http://www.macca.org.af). In short, this work has resulted in an increase in the baseline.

The current baseline and progress is shown in the benchmark table below. However, as people continue to return and resettle in Afghanistan, new hazard continues to be discovered. In addition, there is new hazard being laid by the insurgent forces in some parts of Southern Afghanistan, although not in traditional high-density mine belts. Therefore it is expected that the baseline will continue to change and the progress towards these goals may fluctuate as the challenges to meeting these goals increases.

### AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS TOWARD MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS

70% reduction of mine/ERW contaminated areas by 2011 & clearance of all known anti-personnel landmines by 2013:

Indicator	Adjusted Baseline Mar 2010	Remaining Contamination at 31 Mar 2010	Clearance Processed at 31 Mar 2010	Compact Target of 70% of Hazards	Progress toward Compact	Treaty Target of 100% of Hazards	Progress towards Treaty
<b>Number of Hazards</b>	11,736	6,684	5,052	8,215	61%	11,736	43%
<b>Hazardous Area (sq. km)</b>	1,231	657	574	862	67%	1,231	47%

### THE MINE ACTION STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

The strategy for mine action is based on the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's vision of a country free from landmines and ERW, where people and communities live in a safe environment conducive to national development, and where landmine and ERW survivors are fully integrated in the society and thus have their rights and needs recognized and fulfilled. To turn this vision into reality, the government has established benchmark obligations within its national development strategy, the Afghanistan Compact, which are in accordance with its obligations under the Ottawa Convention.



## SUPPORT TO MINE ACTION NATIONAL CAPACITY

The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) supported by the United Nations and the Government of Afghanistan through its Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)/Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) have formed a partnership within the MACCA offices to plan, coordinate and ensure the quality of all mine action activities in Afghanistan.

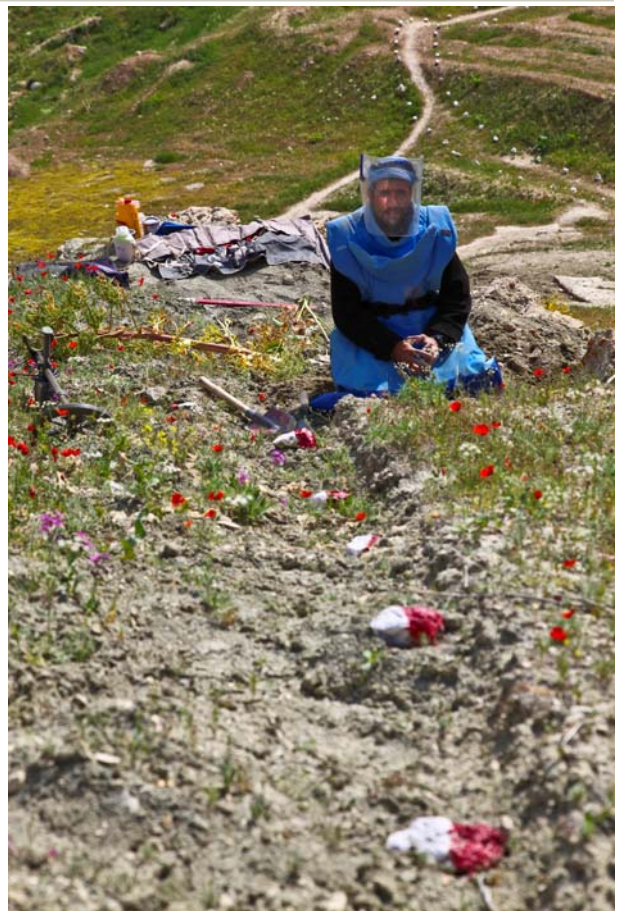


MDD teams returning from demining operation in Charasyab district / June 2009

## MAPA AND MACCA SUMMARY

The concept of humanitarian mine action was developed in Afghanistan in 1988/9. Mine action encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, demining (survey, marking and clearance), stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE), and victim assistance (VA). The programme is funded both bilaterally and through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)<sup>[1]</sup>.

Collectively known as the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), mine action implementers in Afghanistan form one of the largest mine action programmes in the world. Together, these agencies have a twenty year history of successfully delivering mine action in Afghanistan and have cleared over 15,000 hazard areas throughout the country. The MAPA is coordinated by the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is funded through a UN modality. The MACCA has sub-offices, known as Area Mine Action Centres (AMACs) in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar.



Demining Operation in Samangan province

Photo by Jacob Simkin, April 2009

**MAPA is supported by :**

